

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 108359  
ORIGIN EUR-12

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DRAFTED BY EUR:WHLUERS  
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EUR/SOV - MARK GARRISON  
-----078289 280028Z /70  
O 272343Z APR 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 108359

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UR

SUBJECT: LUERS' LUNCH WITH VASEV

1. SUMMARY. LUERS LUNCHEDED WITH MINISTER VASEV APRIL 27,  
DISCUSSED THE PRESIDENT'S RESPONSE TO BREZHNEV'S COMMENTS  
ON ERW, CAT TALKS, SENATE VISIT TO MOSCOW LATE THIS YEAR,  
SECRETARY'S TRIP TO MOSCOW AND HAMILTON CASE. END SUMMARY.

2. VASEV LED OFF WITH A FORCEFUL REASSERTION OF HIS VIEWS  
ON THE PRESIDENT'S HANDLING OF BREZHNEV'S SPEECH. VASEV  
SAID THE PRESIDENT MISSED AN OPPORTUNITY, THAT BREZHNEV  
HAD TRIED TO BE RESPONSIVE ON ERW AND IN THE OVERALL TONE  
OF HIS SPEECH, BUT THE PRESIDENT HAD BEEN TOO BLUNT IN  
REJECTING BREZHNEV'S MODERATE APPROACH. LUERS SAID THAT  
THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS WERE OBVIOUSLY CONSIDERED AND  
REFLECTED THE GOVERNMENT'S VIEW THAT AN APPROPRIATE SOVIET  
RESPONSE TO OUR HOLD UP ON THE PRODUCTION OF THE ERW IS  
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PAGE 02 STATE 108359

NOT TO FOREGO THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT OF A NEUTRON WEAPON.  
THE PRESIDENT CLEARLY WANTED TO NIP IN THE BUD ANY THOUGHT  
THAT AN ADEQUATE RESPONSE WAS EITHER NON-PRODUCTION OF ERW  
OR RESTRAINT ON FURTHER DEPLOYMENT IN EUROPE. LUERS  
SAID THAT PRESIDENT'S PURPOSE WAS TO CONVEY A  
PRECISE MESSAGE QUICKLY THAT THE SOVIETS HAD TO LOOK TO  
REDUCING DEPLOYMENTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE. VASEV REPLIED THAT

THE ERW IS AN OFFENSIVE WEAPON WHICH THE SOVIETS COULD DEVELOP. FROM THEN, THE DISCUSSION DEGENERATED INTO AN

EFFORT BY VASEV, AS A FORMER ARTILLERY OFFICER, TO TALK ABOUT THE ERW'S APPLICATIONS.

3. CAT TALKS. VASEV AT ONE POINT SAID THAT AS A YOUNG NATION THE UNITED STATES STILL DOES NOT APPRECIATE THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING ON INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS(SIC). HE UNDERLINED THE FACT THAT KHLESTOV'S POSITION AT THE OPENING ROUND OF THE CAT TALKS WAS TO STRESS THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL IMPLICATIONS BASED ON UN RESOLUTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW. HE SAID THAT THE FACT THAT MENDELEVICH IS NOW GOING TO HEAD CAT TALKS FOR THE SOVIET SIDE INDICATES THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THE PROPER LEGAL FRAMEWORK HAS BEEN SET AND NOW MENDELEVICH WILL PURSUE THE DISCUSSIONS ON A MORE POLITICAL AND PRACTICAL LEVEL.

4. ASAT. VASEV SAID NOW THAT KHLESTOV WILL HEAD THE SOVIET SIDE ON THE ASAT DISCUSSIONS INDICATES THAT THE SOVIETS WILL BE LOOKING IN THE FIRST INSTANCE TO THE LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE TALKS AND THAT THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION WILL HAVE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES BEFORE MOVING TO THE PRACTICAL ARMS CONTROL ASPECTS FOR BOTH SIDES.

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PAGE 03 STATE 108359

5. SENATORIAL VISIT. VASEV SAID THAT CRANSTON HAD AGREED TO AUTHORIZE A TRIP OF SENATORS TO THE SOVIET UNION IN NOVEMBER-DECEMBER OF THIS YEAR AND THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO MAKE THIS A POSITIVE VISIT.

6. SECRETARY'S TRIP TO MOSCOW. VASEV REPORTED THAT AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN RETURNED WITH A MODERATELY OPTIMISTIC VIEW ON SALT AND THE SECRETARY'S TRIP TO MOSCOW. VASEV SAID THAT DOBRYNIN WAS PLEASANTLY ENCOURAGED BY THE TONE OF THE MOSCOW MEETINGS AND THE SOVIETS NOW LOOKED FORWARD TO COOPERATION IN THE SSOD AS WELL AS FURTHER MOVEMENT ON SALT WITHIN THE NEXT MONTH.

7. THE HAMILTON CASE. LUERS RAISED WITH VASEV AT THE END OF THE LUNCH OUR APPROACHES TO THE SOVIET CONSULAR SECTION ON VICTOR NORRIS HAMILTON WHO DEFECTED TO THE USSR IN 1962. LUERS SAID WE HAD BEEN TOLD BY MR- PONOMAREV OF THE CONSULAR SECTION THAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAVE NO INFORMATION ABOUT MR. HAMILTON. LUERS HANDED VASEV A COPY OF THE JULY 23, 1963 IZVESTIYA ARTICLE WRITTEN BY MR. HAMILTON TO INDICATE THAT THE SOVIETS PRESUMABLY

HAD SOME KNOWLEDGE OF HIS EXISTENCE. ALL WE WISH TO KNOW  
IS WHETHER HE IS ALIVE AND CAN RECEIVE MAIL FROM HIS FAMILY.  
VASEV AGREED TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER.

8. COMMENT: ONE THEME THAT WAS WOVEN BY VASEV INTO THE  
DISCUSSION OF SEVERAL OF THE TOPICS WAS HIS CONCERN THAT  
THE UNITED STATES DID NOT RESPECT THE SOVIET UNION, ITS  
GOVERNMENT AND ITS LEADERS. THIS TYPE OF MOANING IS  
UNCHARACTERISTIC OF VASEV. VANCE

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